

# Southern California dx club

February 2005



SCDXC Board 2005

## Soap Box— Words from our President



Well here it is my first article as the President of the SCDXC. This is really quite an honor for me, if you look at the past Presidents on the web page it is a who's who of DXer's and I'm honored to be part of that list. I would like to congratulate Dick Norton, N6AA and Jan Perkins, N6AW on being voted honorary memberships. They join a

short and very prestigious list of people that the club has bestowed this honor and it was a pleasure to see both of them at the January meeting to receive their plaques.

At this time in the history of amateur radio, most clubs are declining to the level of barely existing. Fortunately for us the opposite is actually happening, in the last two years we have increased our ranks by about 18%. We have more YL's in the club now and they are not just the wives of some members either. They are active DXer's and climbing the ranks. Last year we had our first YL President and I don't think it will be that long before we get our second. We also have several young operators who are making their mark in the club at an early age. I wonder who was the youngest president we've ever had? Are we headed for another first with the youngest ever president of the club? Time will tell.

Most of the Board for this year are returning or moving up the ladder but, I would like to welcome Steve, W6NRQ to the board as our new Secretary. Also returning to the board is Dave, W6AQ, after many years away from the board Dave decided to return to active duty, so to speak. Maybe this will start a trend for past board members to give a year or two to the board. I feel this club gives a lot to its members and I hope the members think about giv-

ing at least a little back to the club when they can.

As most of the members know, the Vice President does the real work of the club. But for some of our members who can't make the meetings as often as we they would like or live out of the area let me tell you the VP does it all. Meeting programs, prizes, picnic, holiday party, summer bash, and complaint department. This is a lot for one person to handle and the first thing I'm going to ask the board to address is to rearrange some of the responsibilities of the VP job and spread the load a little.

We are into February already and that means Visalia is already approaching fast. This year the convention is in the capable hand of the Northern California DX Club but we do have two things we need to get done for the convention. So it is time for everyone to get their nominations in for DXer of the Year and for the new members of the club to submit their applications for the Clipperton Award. See the web page for criteria and rules for these awards (<http://www.scdxc.org/awards.html>). You can submit your nominations/applications to any board member. The deadline for nominations is the March 10 meeting.

As always we are in need of programs, so if you or one of your friends has been on a DXpedition or you think of something you would like to see please let Bubba know about it.

73 DE Jim, N6DHZ

### NOTICE

If you have not paid the 2005 Club dues, this will be the last issue of the SCDXC Newsletter you will receive. Send your check to our Membership chair, K6YUI, Larry Mallek now.

### Next General Meeting

*The SCDXC meets the second Thursday of the month. Our next meeting will be held February 10, 2005 at 7:00 PM at Syd Kronenthal Park in Culver City. The park is located 4 blocks west of La Cienega Blvd. and 2 blocks south of Washington Blvd. From the 10 Freeway exit La Cienega south to Washington Blvd. Turn right (west) 4 blocks to McManus Ave (it's La Cienega Ave to the right, McManus to the left). Turn left (south) 2 blocks to the Park. The street dead-ends at the parking lot.*

*Please do not park in the school lot.*

*Next meeting we will celebrate Valentines Day with a special prize and drawing.*

*See ya there!*

## de the Veep



Hello to all, I am ready to start the New Year and hope everyone else is too. The year like always, starts off with a new SCDXC Board. Congrats to Jim, N6DHZ on his new Presi-

dency and it will be a pleasure to serve as his V.P. The first look at this job seems to be a lot more involved than with the little Secretary job. I do have a tough act to follow, but I will do my best with the monthly programs and raffle prizes and working with the new board. Jim has assured me he will help me since he is the one that dragged me kicking a screaming to a Radio Club Meeting, just kidddingggggg! I am honored to be a member of such a prestigious organization. I still need a few programs for the upcoming year, so if you have any ideas please let me know.

I found out today that after some delays, the Peter 1 Team is still intact and planning on landing on the island February 10th and will be there for only two weeks. Our own N6OX will be the junior member of the team and has assured me a personal contact.....you go Buckwheat! With that? I'll see you in the pile-ups.

I almost forgot to mention Valentines Day and the special drawing for the YLs. We will celebrate Valentines Day at our next meeting with a nice prize and a drawing for YLs only. Everyone is welcome to bring the wife or girlfriend.

## NOMINATIONS FOR AWARDS

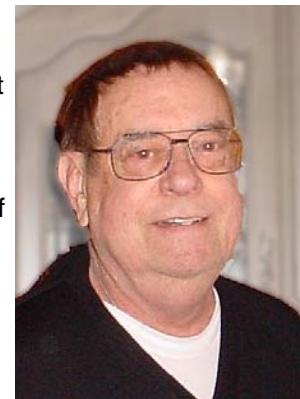
Just a reminder that the board is now accepting applications for the Clipperton award and nominations for DXer of the year. The deadline for both will be February 28, 2005.

Rules for both awards can be found at <http://www.scdxc.org/awards.html>

## THE SECRETARIES BACK DOOR

Hi everybody. Since this is my first attempt to write an article for the bulletin, I hope you will keep me straight and tell me of my many errors. RIGHT?

Some of you don't know, but many of us meet at the Roll and Rye deli in Culver City before the meeting for good food and only "ham" kind of talk. Come and join us sometime.



Our newly elected District Director Dick Norton N6AA stopped by and gave us an update on some of the things happening at the league. Later during the meeting Jan Perkins N6AW and Dick were awarded honorary membership into the SCDXC for recognition of their many contributions to the DX world and to Amateur Radio. Congratulations to the both of you.

The program as always has been a highlight of the evening and this was no exception. Mike Mraz N6MZ gave a great insight into the new Icom IC7800. His presentation took us into the guts of the radio and let us see first hand of its many benefits. Thank you Mike, great job. Mike will also start servicing the "Y" group at the 6<sup>th</sup> QSL bureaus.

We wish to thank Ham Radio Outlet and their staff for the great support afforded us during the year. That brings me to the great job Jim did on the prizes this year. Thanks Jim.

Who else can I talk about? Oh yes, our own Kathy. Poor girl had to give up her pink badge to receive the coveted black

*(Continued on page 4)*

## REPATER INFORMATION

Ed, N6OU, informed us that W6AM/R will be off the air for a few weeks as repairs are necessary at the site. This is expected in March/April. More next month.

# Propagation

## February 2005

by Shel, W6EL

These predictions for the five prime HF bands show the times when propagation is expected to be best from Los Angeles to several locations that are expected to be active during the coming month.

Other times are possible, but with weaker signals or lower probability. Openings are not expected on bands that are not listed. A solar flux of 100, corresponding to a sunspot number of 44, and an average geomagnetic field are assumed. Sunrise/sunset times are at the DX location. All times are UTC.

Good luck and good DX from Shel, W6EL.

**S2 Bangladesh** - 2/4 to 2/7 - Beam 331 degrees  
Sunrise/sunset (on 2/6) 0040/1144  
80: Perhaps around 1400.  
40: 1230-1500.  
20: 1600-1700 and 0000-0200. Long path 0030-0130.

**T5 (6O) Somalia** - 2/3 to 2/17 - Beam 24 degrees  
Sunrise/sunset (on 2/10) 0314/1506  
40: Around 0130.  
20: 2100-0030 and 1500-1700. Long path 1500-1530.  
15: 1700-2300.

**FR Reunion** - 2/2 to 2/22 - Beam 24 degrees  
Sunrise/sunset (on 2/12) 0211/1453  
40: Around 0130. Long path around 1430.  
20: 2100-0030, 0200-0230, and 1500-1630. Long path  
1500-1530.

**V3 Belize** - 2/10 to 2/14 - Beam 115 degrees  
Sunrise/sunset (on 2/12) 1225/2351  
80: 0230-1130.  
40: 0130-1230.  
20: 1530-0100.  
15: 1800-2200.

**JT Mongolia** - 2/10 to 2/18 - Beam 332 degrees  
Sunrise/sunset (on 2/14) 0008/1012  
80: 1230-1400.  
40: 1030-1430.  
20: 0000-0300

**3Y Peter I Island** - 2/11 to 2/25 - Beam 170 degrees  
Sunrise/sunset (on 2/18) 1010/0222  
80: 0500-0830.  
40: 0300-1030.  
20: 0130-0700.  
15: 2330-0130 and around 0230.



(Continued from page 3)

# THE SECRETARIES BACK DOOR

badge of a past president. You had a great year Cathy, thank you. To the officers of 2004, Great year, great job.

Your new officers for 2005 are:

President	Jim Shryne N6DHZ
Vice President	Bob "Bubba" Paquette W6ZPL
Secretary	Steve Shane W6NRQ
Treasurer	A.J."Doc" Holub K6OGO
Membership	Larry Mallek K6YUI
Director	Dave Bell W6AQ
Director	Howard Elovitz W6ECZ
Ex officio	
Director	Cathy Gardenias K6VC

73 and good DX Steve, W6NRQ

# 2005 INTERNATIONAL DX CONVENTION

Apr 15-17,2005 - 2005 International DX Convention, sponsored by Northern California DX Club, will be held at the Holiday Inn Hotel & Conference Center, Visalia, CA. Convention website: <http://www.ncdxc.org/> Contact Dick Letrich, W6KM, 408-267-2624, [dlw6km@aol.com](mailto:dlw6km@aol.com)

## **PXCC Criteria Changed**

The ARRL has redefined what constitutes a “country” for DXCC. A “political entity” must now either be a member state of the UN or have a call sign prefix block assigned to it by the ITU. Dropped from the list is existence by virtue of having your own ham society that’s a member of the IARU.

That provision had been added in 1998, and four "entities" had qualified for inclusion as "DXCC countries" under it. The ARRL says the change will not affect their status.

Also, the ARRL has discontinued three awards, the Rag Chewer's Club, the Old Timer's Club and the Friendship Award.

## BREAKING THE PILE-UP

by Roger Barkley, W6LAX

Tuning across 20-meter CW one afternoon I came across a pile-up with a couple of dozen stations frantically calling a DX station. Listening down a little, I heard the object of their calls: a D44 who was about 579 here. Swinging the beam to 75-degrees and tuning onto the frequency of the last station, I gave a call: "W6LAX".

Instantly the D44 came back to me. "Wow!" I exclaimed aloud. I couldn't believe it. We exchanged 5NN as I practically fell back out of my chair. I had just broken a pile-up with a single call ... using my 5-watt Elecraft K-1, so new that it was still outside its enclosure with wires hanging out, my soldering iron still warm from its construction.

This wasn't my first QRP DX, but that first one had come by accident. I had been adjusting my antenna tuner and had forgotten to turn the power back up on my Mark V. Hearing a 589-level Norway station's CQ, I responded. I got through, but I was disappointed to only get a 559 back. Then I saw my error: I mistakenly was running less than 5 watts. I felt a new thrill that morning.

This was the incentive I needed to dust-off my soldering iron. I purchased a K-1 kit right before my Christmas vacation and spent several days absorbed in its construction. The smell of solder and the feel of winding coils took me back to my youth when I built a lot of my own gear.

To be honest, I felt some trepidation as I started the kit: It had been years since I had built anything and components have gotten mighty small in the meantime. I hate to invest time and ego in such a project only to feel foolish when it doesn't work right. But Elecraft kits are well thought out, their instructions are easy to follow, and their quality is superb; mine worked the first time I powered up.

My next project was to build a little Buddipole antenna that breaks into 3-foot sections that I can carry onto local mountaintops. From there I have operated the K-1 powered by AA batteries – not capturing DX by SCDXC standards, but excited when east coast stations come back. The neat thing about operating from places like the top of Rocky Peak is that the band is much quieter than in the middle of a suburb, and you can place the antenna where there is a couple of hundred foot drop on three sides. My only fear is QRM from local rattlers.

I had the chance to operate a K-2 for a couple of months last year when a friend asked me to baby-sit his while he traveled abroad. Everything you read in their ads is true: it is an incredibly sensitive, sharp and selective receiver. I worked some of an SSB contest with it and felt it performed at least as well as my Mark V. Surprisingly, even the K-1 (to which I've now added audio DSP) is a superb receiver.

So, if you'd like to add some new excitement to your operating, or if you just have some fun building a kit, checkout the Elecraft line. It shook some of the ham doldrums out of me.



The K-1 shortly after breaking the pile-up



Operating from Rocky Peak

## All's Well That Ends Well – A DX-Venture to The Bahamas de Randy W6SJ

After my first successful DX-Venture to The Bahamas in February 2004, I got ambitious and thought about testing the limits of what I could fool the airlines into accepting as baggage and what I could manage from a logistical standpoint. We really loved the island and made plans to participate in the CQ WW DX CW Contest. How can you not love a place with sunrises like this?



On the last trip I took just a two vertical antennas and a dipole for 80 meters. These worked well during the ARRL DX contest but all I had to do was contact U.S. stations, no great test. With dreams of DX dancing like sugar-plums in my head, I started making more adventuresome plans.

I then spent hours developing a plan whereby I might contact as many of the rare entities and rare zone as I could. I tried just about every propagation program I could find, to wit: W6ELProp, DXPROP, PropHF, HamCap, WinCap, and SpotPath. I also used the spreadsheets that come on the CD distributed with the ARRL Antenna Book.

Logistically, I had to limit myself to wire antennas and a maximum package length of 4 feet. I had a successful experience with a Moxon antenna during Field Day, so I built one for 20 meters. At least I knew its potential.

My other antennas were a double-extended zepp antenna for 15 meters, an Inverted Vee Beam for 40 meters, and a full-size 160 meter dipole for 160 and 80. I had my trusty Sigma 5 vertical for 10 meters and as backup for the other bands.

My rig consisted of an Icom IC-76MkIIIG rig with an MFJ antenna tuner, Logikey keyer and a computer loaded with N3JFP's logging software. No Internet access was available due to hurricanes damage, but that was OK.

We left on Thanksgiving Day and the next morning I started erecting antennas. I bought one of those Aluminum masts that come in 4 foot sections, and with a little help soon had my Moxon 28 feet up, theoretically its optimum height. With two sets of guy ropes, the array survived over 48 hours of winds that exceeded 40 mph on occasion. Amazingly, I was able to erect the entire farm in one day, finishing at sundown, 2 hours before the contest started, so I had virtually no time for testing. Mistake!

By 6:45 PM, after a quick shower and dinner, I was ready to get things going, only to find out that my computer screen was going black, a problem it had had six months before but not since. I borrowed another laptop from my hosts and logged the first three hours of the contest on an Excel spreadsheet, not something I advise you to try.



Quite frankly, I had trouble getting antennas to tune correctly and kept fiddling around with them, trying to get something to work. The 40 meter beam was giving me fits, not tuning consistently, so I switched to the 160 meter dipole which didn't tune at all on 160 but did tune acceptably on 40 meters and 80 meters. Of course, at its modest height, the radiation pattern is virtually circular.

The Moxon worked great on 20 meters, tuning at <1.5:1 with an S9 + 10. I had good results with it, my computer decided to wake up, so I started using my logging program, and finally got a good run going. Results with 40 meters were not as good and I went to bed about midnight.

I got up early the next morning, hoping to work JA's on 40 meters with my beam, but heard few and only worked one. I fiddled around with 10 meters for a while, making a few contacts. 20 meters was a zoo and I decided to let it cool off and work on 15 for a while. I managed to get a good run going, well over 150 per hour when all of a sudden, I could not hear a thing. The S-meter showed life, but no audio.

I fiddled round with my rig for a while but the sad truth was that the audio amplifier in the IC-706 had blown. I thus discovered a little known threat that all hams should guard against: LISTENING TOO HARD CAN RUIN YOUR AUDIO AMPLIFIER!

I did not have a spare rig so I was out of business, finished, kaput, QRT. I had put an enormous amount of planning and preparation into this trip, and was very hopeful of hanging up a credible score, but the lack of a solution meant my fate was sealed so completely that there just didn't seem to be any point in sulking about it.



You got it, Yogi!

"Wait a minute," you ask, "Going to all that work and then having an abrupt QRT one-quarter of the way into a contest sounds like a horrible conclusion, so what was this about All's Well That Ends Well?"

The answer is that fishing was terrific! I managed to catch a couple dozen bonefish, over half in the 3 to 5 pound class, and one over 7 pounds. We also saw and had a shot at several fish that were in the 10 to 12 pound class, very respectable fish. They'll still be there when I go back, and I will! But this time I'll be sure to do a SOSR, that's Single Operator-Spare Radio!

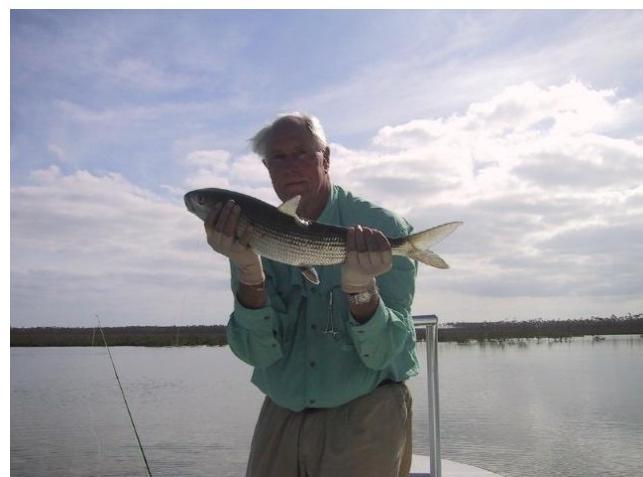
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I do not have my score yet as I need to enter the 100+ contacts from the Excel program that I logged when my computer flopped



You may remember the word *hubris*, a Greek concept where the gods punished people who got too presumptuous, who aimed too high. The gods always had the last word, knocking them down a few pegs. I don't think that I was presumptuous, but I do believe that I bit off more than was reasonable for a one-man operation. That said, I'd do the same thing again if I could take along a partner.

I am a big believer in redundancy. I had two of almost everything and I thought that I had covered all of the bases. Not so, obviously. I should have taken a back-up rig along too. As Yogi Berra surely could have said, "You ought to take a long some EXTRA redundancy."



## IOTA by Fred N6AWD



A brief history of the IOTA program starts some 40 years ago when eminent British short-wave listener Geoff Watts was the founder and long-term editor (1962-1982) of The DX News Sheet, and in 1964 Geoff Watts created the IOTA (Islands-On-The-Air) Award. When IOTA was taken over by the RSGB in 1985 it had already become, for some a favorite award. Its popularity grows each year and it is highly regarded among amateurs worldwide. Geoff was the first SWL to receive confirmations from all 40 CQ Zones in 1958, the first British SWL with 300 countries confirmed and was #1 on the SWL DXCC Honor Roll for many years. For his efforts as editor, inventing the IOTA Program and many other services to the DX community, Geoff Watts was elected to the CQ DX Hall of Fame in 1977, the only non-licensed amateur ever to be so honored. Geoff Watts passed away in 1994.



The first IOTA directory was published in 1964 by Geoff Watt containing 500 island groups and at that time there were only 194 which had been activated. In 1985 the program was taken over by the RSGB with Roger Balister G3KMA as manager and Martin Atherton G3ZAY as committee chairman. Since then IOTA activity has increased to the current level of over 1000 island groups have been activated and there are over 3000 world wide members who have applied for submission for credit. The current directory, namely the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary edition contains listings of 1200 island group and over 15000 individual island names as well as their designation. The directory has 136 pages containing all the rules and awards available.

Come join us at the upcoming Visalia DX Convention .....The IOTA group will have a no-host Dinner on Friday night in the Birch room at the Holiday Inn starting at 6 p.m.....more details can be found on the Convention web site



### BLACK BADGE

This smiling lady is our Past President, Cathy, AKA K6VC, as she received the Black Badge signifying she is a member of the Past Prez Klub.

Thanks for the great job and we all wish you the very best!

### HELP US

The SCDXC Newsletter needs your articles and photos. If you have an idea for an article, but are uncomfortable writing, we have a deal for you. Contact the editor and we will help you put the words down.

Also, if you see a news piece that should be brought to the attention of club members, send it in (with the source noted please)

The quality of the newsletter is up to you.

## A Message from the WEBMASTER

Are you using AOL? Not getting all your e-mail lately?

AOL has once again implemented some new anti-spam software so you may not be getting all your mail lists or other e-mails you have subscribed to. I have about 7 different mail servers at my disposal and AOL will not accept mail from any of them. So I'm effectively unable to send e-mails to anyone on AOL. I know that Bernie, W3UR is also having problems getting the Daily DX ([www.dailyydx.com](http://www.dailyydx.com)) out to subscribers at AOL.

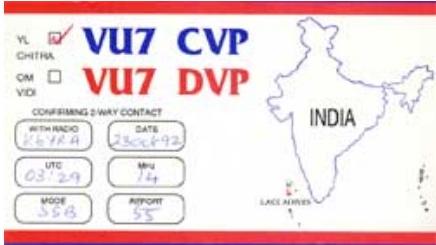
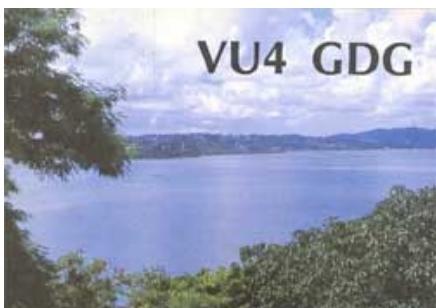
So if you don't get a reply from me or others, it's not that we haven't tried to e-mail you it's just AOL is bouncing our e-mails and there is nothing we can do about it. Why you ask? Well, the bounced e-mail from AOL gives you an e-mail address to contact if your e-mail is being bounced and it is not spam. But unfortunately any e-mail I send to their postmaster is also bounced as spam. No wonder those of us in the real cyber world refer to them as America Off Line.



### HONORARY MEMBERS

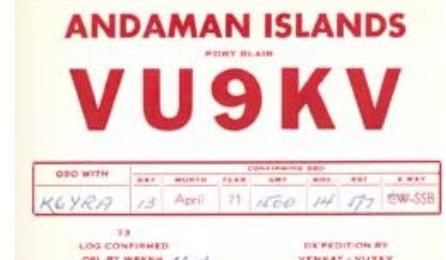
The SCDXC is pleased to announce our new Honorary members. Jan, N6AW and Dick N6AA.

Congratulations!



### VU DXpedition

There was a time — a long time ago — when VU4 and VU9 were on the air and "easy pikin". Al, K6YRA, reminds us of those days of yesteryear with these goodies.



**Pre-Registration Form  
International DX Convention (Visalia)  
April 15-17, 2005**

Banquet Meal Choice(s): C = Chicken, P = Prime Rib, S = Salmon, V = Vegetarian  
(Circle Below)

Convention

Meal Polo Shirts

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Call \_\_\_\_\_ C P S V M L XL XXL

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Country, USA or (?) \_\_\_\_\_

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Pre-Registration, Post Marked by 3-15-05, \$65.00 per person. ----- \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Convention Polo Shirts \_\_\_\_\_ X \$ 30.00 ----- \$ \_\_\_\_\_

After 3-15-05 or at the Convention = \$70.00 per person. ----- \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Non-Amateur: Dinner & Breakfast only, \$35.00 per person. ----- \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Your Check # \_\_\_\_\_ ----- Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please, make check payable to: NCDXC Convention 05  
( Please, do not send cash! )

Mail this form with payment to: IDXC 2005, c/o Dick Letrich, W6KM  
3686 Kirk Road  
San Jose, CA 95124-3816

Convention Location: Holiday Inn Plaza Park,  
9000 W. Airport Drive, Visalia, CA  
Tel. 559-651-5000

## Who We Are

The SCDXC Newsletter is published monthly by the Southern California DX Club and is e-mailed to all club members.

Please notify the editor if you do not receive your newsletter, have a change of address, or have found an error.

Please direct all submissions to the editor.

The SCDXC generally permits re-use of any article in the Newsletter as long as the newsletter and the article's author are credited. However, some articles may be copyrighted by the author. Please contact the editor.

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## FOR SALE

**Johnson Valiant-original condition. No electrical mods but there is one empty 3/8" empty hole on front panel and one knob missing. Gonna need some TLC but it works into a dummy load. Pick up only as it weighs 85#. Includes a full schematic diagram, cabinet and thru bolts. \$385.00 obo. Marv at [K6HCJ@arrl.net](mailto:K6HCJ@arrl.net)**

### A note from Rich

This morning, January 3, 2005, I worked **Terry, W6/G3MHV** from Fukuoka Japan on 40 meters. He tells me that he and his wife **Mady, KP3YL**, will be in Japan until the end of April. They are using the call signs of 7J6ABN (Terry) and 7J6AAB (Mady). Both are very active on CW and would like to work as many club members as possible.

73 de Rich W6VX

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## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION, New or Renewal

Return to membership chairman: **Larry Mallek** 2528 Britain Way, Anaheim CA, 92801-1413

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MAILING ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/STATE/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

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**SCDXC Dues are \$18.00 per year, make checks payable to SCDXC**